



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

10/565,784

01/25/2006

Katsuhiro Kubota

060070

7550

23850 7590 12/11/2007  
KRATZ, QUINTOS & HANSON, LLP  
1420 K Street, N.W.  
Suite 400  
WASHINGTON, DC 20005

EXAMINER

TA, THO DAC

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2833

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

12/11/2007

PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/565,784

Applicant(s)

KUBOTA ET AL.

Examiner

Tho D. Ta

Art Unit

2833

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 November 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 and 11-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 2-4, 6 and 14 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 5, 7-9, 11-13, 15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114***

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 11/28/07 has been entered.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claims 7, 12-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 7, line 2, the limitation "the back" lacks antecedent basis.

Claim 12 is vague and indefinite, it is unclear whether the slide-engaging part recited in claim 12 is the same as a slide-engaging part recited in claim 9 because claim 9 had already recited that a slide-engaging part is engaging with a guide part. For purpose of examination, Examiner assumes that the slide-engaging part recited in claim 12 is not the same as a slide-engaging part recited in claim 9.

Claim 14, line 8, the limitation "the slide-engaging part" lacks antecedent basis.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

5. Claims 9, 11, 12, 13, 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Shiina et al. (6,597,578).

In regard to claim 9, Shiina et al. discloses a junction block comprising: an inner cover 17; and a power block and connector blocks 12, 13, 14 combined with the inner cover 17, wherein components such as circuit boards are disposed and connected within a space surrounded by the power block and the connector blocks, wherein the power block and the connector blocks form the outside of the junction block, wherein the combination of the power block and the connector blocks with the inner cover 17 is carried out by engaging a slide-engaging part 17b with a guide part 13c, 14c in a direction crossing the inner cover 17 at right angles.

In regard to claim 12, Shiina et al. discloses the slide-engaging part (the sidewall of the block) of the connector block or the power block enters into a dead space (the recitation "dead space" is not clearly defined and is so broad that virtually

any surfaces of the blocks when touching each other after the assembly of the junction block as shown in fig. 6A meets this limitation) in the power block or the connector block, respectively.

In regard to claim 13, Shiina et al. discloses the dead space is within a connector (see fig. 6A).

In regard to claim 15, Shiina et al. discloses engaging parts 17b for engaging the power block and the connector blocks with the inner cover 17 and a mount 17a on the inner cover 17, and such engaging is carried out in the vicinity of the mount of the inner cover 17.

In regard to claim 11, Shiina et al. discloses a junction block comprising: an inner cover 17; and a power block and connector blocks 12-14 combined with the inner cover 17, wherein components such as circuit boards are disposed and connected within a space surrounded by the power block and the connector blocks, the power block and the connector blocks form the outside of the junction block, the combination of the power block and the connector blocks with the inner cover is carried out by engaging a slide-engaging part 17b with a guide part 13c, 14c in a direction crossing the inner cover at right angles, and one of the connector blocks is combined with the inner cover 17, while the other connector block is combined with the power block (see figures 1, 6A).

6. Claims 1, 5, 7, 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Sumida et al. (6,677,521).

In regard to claim 1, Sumida et al. discloses a junction block 10 comprising: an inner cover 14; connector blocks and a power block disposed along outside edges of the inner cover 14 (see fig. 1) to form a circumferential wall of the junction block 10 and at least partially define a space; and busbars 22 and a wiring module 21 disposed being piled up within the space surrounded by the connector blocks and the power block, wherein terminals of the connector blocks, terminals of the power block and terminals of the busbars are connected to the wiring module.

In regard to claim 5, Sumida et al. discloses the terminals of the connector blocks and/or the terminals of the power block and/or the terminals of the busbars are pressure welding terminals (column 12, lines 5-10).

In regard to claim 7, Sumida et al. discloses an electronic unit 58 is mounted on the back of the inner cover 14 and connected to terminals arranged on the back of the busbars 22 (see fig. 3).

In regard to claim 8, Sumida et al. discloses the inner cover 14, the connector blocks and the power block are slidably combined (the recitation "slidably combined" is

so broad that virtually any surfaces of the blocks when touching each other after the assembly of junction block 10 as shown in fig. 2 meets this limitation).

In regard to claim 9, Shiina et al. discloses a junction block comprising: an inner cover 17; and a power block and connector blocks 12, 13, 14 combined with the inner cover 17, wherein components such as circuit boards are disposed and connected within a space surrounded by the power block and the connector blocks, wherein the power block and the connector blocks form the outside of the junction block, wherein the combination of the power block and the connector blocks with the inner cover 17 is carried out by engaging a slide-engaging part 17b with a guide part 13c, 14c in a direction crossing the inner cover 17 at right angles.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

7. Claims 2-4, 6 and 14 are allowed.
8. The indicated allowability of claims 1 and 11 are withdrawn in view of the newly discovered reference(s).

***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tho D. Ta whose telephone number is (571) 272-2014. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (8:00-5:30).

Application/Control Number:  
10/565,784  
Art Unit: 2833

Page 7

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paula A. Bradley can be reached on (571) 272-2800 ext 33. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

tdt  
12/06/07



THO D. TA  
PRIMARY EXAMINER